

CLAIMSWhat is claimed is:

- 5      1.      A bearing assembly having at least two bearing elements spaced by a first body, the first body having means for flexing.
2.      A bearing assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein, in use, when a load is applied to the bearing assembly the first body is caused to flex.
- 10      3.      (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [either of claims] claim 1 [or 2], wherein the flexing means comprise at least one groove or notch formed on the first body.
4.      (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [any of claims] claim [1 to] 3, wherein the
- 15      first body is substantially annular in shape, the at least one groove being formed on an outer surface of the first body.
5.      (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [either of claims] claim [3 or] 4, wherein the groove is substantially U-shaped.
- 20      6.      (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [any preceding] claim 5, wherein the first body is rigidly mounted to a body to which load is applied, in use.

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7. (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [any preceding claim] claim 5, wherein a first annular surface of the first body is provided with a first annular raceway.

8. A bearing assembly as claimed in claim 7, wherein a second annular surface of the first  
5 body is provided with a second annular raceway.

9. A bearing assembly as claimed in claim 8, wherein the first and second bearing elements each comprise a plurality of balls, the first and second bearing elements being received for movement within the first and second annular raceways of the first body.

10. (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [any preceding] claim 6, wherein the means for flexing flexes about a longitudinal axis of the first body.

11. (Amended) A bearing assembly as claimed in [any of claims 4 to] claim 10 [when  
15 dependent upon claim 3], wherein the groove is provided substantially circumferentially around the first body.

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12. (Amended) A bearing assembly [having at least two bearing elements spaced by a first body,] as in claim 1, wherein the means for flexing comprises a circumferential groove about the  
20 first body of sufficient depth so that the first body [being] is at least partly flexible under thrust load.

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13. (Amended) A bearing unit comprising [at least one bearing assembly] a plurality of bearing assemblies according to [any of claims 1 to 12] claim 5.

5 14. A bearing unit as claimed in claim 13, wherein adjacent bearing assemblies are spaced by a second body.

15. A bearing unit as claimed in claim 14, wherein the second body is substantially annular in shape.

10 16. (Amended) A bearing unit as claimed in claim [either of claims 14 or] 15, wherein the second body is rigidly mounted to a further body to which load is not [(directly)] directly applied in use.

15 17. (Amended) A bearing unit as claimed in claim [any of claims] 14 [to 16], wherein a first annular surface of the second body is provided with a first annular raceway.

18. A bearing unit as claimed in claim 17, wherein a second annular surface of the second body is provided with a second annular raceway.

20 19. A bearing unit as claimed in claim 18, wherein respective first and second bearing elements are received for movement within the first and second annular raceways of the second body.

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20. (Amended) A bearing unit as claimed in [claims 13 to] claim 19, wherein adjacent first bodies are spaced by a respective first spacer element.

21. (Amended) A bearing unit as claimed in claim [any of claims 13 to 20] 19, wherein adjacent second bodies are spaced by a respective second spacer element.

22. (Amended) A bearing unit as claimed in claim [any of claims 13 to 21] 19, wherein a further first spacer is provided between an end to which force is applied, in use and an adjacent end of an adjacent first body.

23. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus including a bearing assembly according to [any of claims 1 to 12] 5.

24. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus including a bearing unit according to [any of claims 13 to 22] claim 19.

25. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in [either of claims 23 or] claim 24, [wherein the tool is a down-hole tool, eg.] for use in a borehole of an [oil/gas] oil well or gas well.

26. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in [any of claims 23 to 25] claim 25, [wherein the tool comprises part of a borehole drilling apparatus, which optionally includes] further comprising a down-hole motor.

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27. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in [any of claims 23 to 27] claim 25, wherein [the/a] the first body is rigidly mounted to a shaft to which load is applied, in use.

28. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim 27, wherein the shaft is contained  
5 substantially concentrically within the bearing [assembly/unit] unit.

29. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim [24 or any of claims] 25 [to 28 when dependent upon claims 23], wherein the second body is rigidly mounted to a housing.

10 30. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim 29, wherein the housing [is] substantially concentrically surrounds the bearing [assembly/unit] unit.

31. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim [24 or any of claims] 25 [to 30 when dependent upon claim 24] wherein adjacent first bodies are longitudinally spaced by a first  
15 spacer element.

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32. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim 31 [when dependent upon claim 27,] wherein the first spacer [elements is/are] element is mounted on the shaft.

20 33. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim [24 or any of claims] 25 [to 22 when dependent upon claim 24], wherein adjacent second bodies are longitudinally spaced by a

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second spacer element.

34. (Amended) [A tool or] An apparatus as claimed in claim 33 [when dependent upon claim 29], wherein the second spacer [elements is/are] element is mounted on the housing.

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